



# CATECHISM OF BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY

COVENANT CHRISTIAN COALITION



# **CATECHISM OF BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY**

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# THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH



# I. What is Truth?

*Seeing* that things exist, and things cannot come from true nothingness, there must be something that caused all things visible and invisible. The original and ultimate cause of all things must necessarily be transcendent and self-existent or else there would be an eternal procession of created things causing created things, which is a logical impossibility. This bedrock truth is one of the foundations of philosophy throughout all of human history and was promulgated not only by Judeo-Christianity and the Abrahamic traditions, but also by the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Arabs, and is even acceded to by modern scientific philosophers who posit the existence of an eternal, self-existent, all-encompassing dimension that might have given rise to our universe. Acknowledging that this self-existent dimension or entity contains all possible information and energy and is omnipresent, the secular mind still chooses to regard it as unintelligent and unaware, but that is folly.

*Knowing* that God is the greatest conceivable being and that it is greater to exist than not to exist, God must necessarily exist or else He would not be the greatest conceivable being. Thus, the existence of the supreme, self-existent being can be proven through reason and intellect alone.

*Discerning* the impossibility of non-life giving rise to life because of the incomprehensible complexity of living beings, and considering that the universe appears perfectly and improbably tailored for the existence of life, there must necessarily be a super-intelligence that created the universe with the perfect parameters for life who then created incomprehensibly complex lifeforms.

*Perceiving* the universality of spiritual truths such as love, beauty, and morality and that such things cannot be adequately explained through mere natural mechanisms, there must be a being who Himself is beautiful, moral, and loving.

*Concluding* that all belief systems aside from monotheism, such as atheism, polytheism, and pantheism, disregard these basic, foundational truths of common sense and simple logic, the ultimate truth and purpose of life must be found in believing in and worshiping this transcendent God who created all things and who has chosen to reveal Himself to us through means of reason, creation, and spiritual revelation.

## II. Who is God?

Having concluded that God must exist, we can then discern which God must be followed and believed in. There are many religious texts that claim to reveal the true God and there are many people who have claimed to either be God or to know God, but only one religious text withstands all scrutiny and only one person's claim to be God passes muster.

*Judeo-Christianity* predates all modern religions, beginning in the 20th century BC when Abram heeded God's call to migrate to Canaan. His monotheistic faith not only set the stage for the Bible to be written, but also for the coming of the Messiah (the Redeemer of mankind). Judaism proper—adherence to the Law of Moses—came about in the 15th century BC when the Israelites escaped Egypt and their earthly leader Moses received God's instructions (the first five books of the Bible, called the *Torah* or *Pentateuch*).

All other modern religions developed later: Hinduism circa 1000–500 BC, Zoroastrianism circa 600 BC, Buddhism in the 5th century BC, Taoism in the 4th century BC, and Islam in the 6th or 7th century AD. *Judeo-Christianity* preceded all of these by at least 500 years.

Some might argue that Christianity was not established until 32 or 33 AD. In actuality that was not the case and that is why we use the term *Judeo-Christianity*. The central theme of all the ancient Hebrew religious texts is the belief in a coming Messiah who would redeem God's people. This Anointed One (called *Christ* in Greek or *Messiah* in Hebrew) would fulfill the Law, Psalms, and Prophets, save the lost, and establish an everlasting Kingdom. The very first prophecy given in the Bible is about Him (Gen. 3:15) and the Old Testament (called the *Tanakh* in Judaism) is replete with descriptions about Him and what He would do and accomplish (e.g., Deut. 18:14–22; Job 19:25; Ps. 2; Ps. 22; Isa. 9:1–7; Is. 53; Zech. 12:10–14; 14:3–4). The Old Testament is about Christ and His people the Israelites. It is proto-Christianity in the truest sense.

The source of monotheism and religion itself is *Judeo-Christianity*. Common religious concepts like *God*, *worship*, *ritual*, *faith*, *forgiveness*, *grace*, and *redemption* all stem from the Bible and the revelations contained therein. All other religions are corrupted and twisted imitations—counterfeits of the original.

In secular circles it is common to speak collectively of books like the Bible, Koran, and Bhagavad Gita as “holy texts” or “holy books,” but the term is inaccurate and causes confusion. By very definition the terms equate all truth claims and neglect objectivity. Each of these books contain numerous mutually exclusive tenets and statements that are presented as facts. Not all are true and not all are holy. For example, the Bible repeatedly claims that Yahweh is the only God (e.g., Deut. 4:35, 39; 6:4; 32:39; Isa. 43:10; 44:6, 8; 45:21; 46:9; Mk. 12:29–34; Jn. 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:4–6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Jas. 2:19) and that Jesus is the only source of salvation (e.g., Ps. 2:1–12; Jn. 3:18, 36;

8:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jn. 5:11–13). Allah, Brahma, Zeus, and Ba'al can't be gods and neither can Islam, Hinduism, or the Buddha be paths to salvation if the Bible's claims are true.

A foundational belief of the Judeo-Christian faith presented in the Bible is that reality itself is rooted in the self-existent God (*Yahweh/Yehovah*, whose Name means “I Am that I Am” or “The One who is, who was, and who is to come”) and only God's revelations to men can be regarded as objective truth. From the very beginning of the Bible we discover that the book presents the Deity as self-existent, outside of time, transcendent, and personally involved in His creation—both before and after His creative activity. Therefore, the Bible and the Noahic-Abrahamic traditions that preceded it proclaim monotheism to be objective truth. This necessarily rules out pantheism, panentheism, polytheism, animism, and deism—the bulk of all other religions.

But is the Bible's claim about the Deity correct? The cosmological, teleological, and ontological arguments, in addition to numerous other arguments, are indisputable rationale for the existence of a transcendent, self-existent being. This scholarly and philosophical foundation is unique to monotheism among all other religions and belief systems. God is the simplest, most logical, and most rational explanation for all that we see around us.

“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, by the things made being understood, are plainly seen, both His eternal power and Godhead—to their being inexcusable...”

- Romans 1:20 (LSV)

“You—you have been shown [it], to know that He, YHWH, [is] God; there is none else besides Him.”

- Deuteronomy 4:35 (LSV)

But how do we know the Bible itself is true? The correct answer is because the Bible is God-breathed. In its original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek manuscripts it is inerrant and infallible. The true God spoke true words audibly, and sometimes into the minds, of fallible human beings (c.f. 2 Tim. 3:16–17 and 2 Pet. 1:20–21). But, understandably, that answer will not satisfy the skeptic. There are at least six key arguments that powerfully vouch for the Bible's unique authenticity:

**1. *Every claim in the Bible that can be demonstrably tested has been verified.*** In other words, if we presently possess some scientific know-how, archaeological discovery, or corroborating text that can directly test a specific claim from the Bible, the claim has been verified. As a matter of fact, this truth has been a great source of humiliation for secular historians over the past several decades as discovery after discovery has proven the Bible true even after historians had said “it just can’t be.” Whether it be the fallen walls of Jericho, the reign of King Hezekiah, or even the existence of a Jewish temple, every bit of physical evidence that has turned up to answer the Bible’s claims has proven the Bible true.

**2. *There are more ancient manuscripts of the Bible than any other ancient text.*** Furthermore, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1946/47 dealt a significant defeat to the theory of that generation’s textual critics. They had taught that the Old Testament was composed much later than Jews and Christians believed and had undergone a significant evolution in content. Not only did the Dead Sea Scrolls disprove that claim, showing that the Old Testament we have today is equivalent to the one used by Christ and His disciples, but they also provided rock-solid evidence that numerous prophecies about Jesus Christ were written before He was born.

**3. *The Bible contains self-verifying mathematical and thematic codes underlying the text.*** In recent years scholars have discovered numerous number patterns in the text in various books such as Genesis and the synoptic gospels, that would be impossible for humans to have developed on their own. There are similar thematic codes that testify to the Bible’s divine origins.

**4. *Despite having been written over a period of 1,600 years by 40 different authors, the Bible forms a single metanarrative.*** The Bible forms a continuous story with a clear beginning, ending, climax, protagonist, antagonist and complex, repeating themes that recur in almost every book. Yet its authors’ lives were separated by many centuries, occurring on three different continents, and in several different ancient cultures. This incredible collection of history, poetry, prophecy, and letters forms a single, overarching story from beginning to end. The protagonist and antagonist show up at the beginning of the story, continue their parts throughout, and reach a climactic moment, culminating with a final showdown at the very end. Dozens of themes, symbols, and patterns recur through the entire text, from Genesis to Revelation. No other religious text can boast of such miraculous development.

**5. *The Bible forms a doctrinal hologram.*** Typical religious texts are one or two-dimensional. If you take out a passage from the text the religion is fundamentally altered—removing key doctrines. It is like a painting on a canvas—mar a section of the picture and you can no longer see the whole. Strangely, the Bible is different. From a doctrinal perspective it forms something analogous to a three-dimensional hologram. You can remove any piece of a hologram, move to a different viewing angle and still see the whole. Doctrines revealed in the Bible are spread out across the entire book, like an interconnected web. This is strong evidence that the book’s underlying author intended His message to get through even if someone tampered with the text. This complex web



or layering is hinted at in Isaiah 28: “...precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little.”

**6. *Prophecy is unique to the Bible and is its watermark of authenticity.*** Other religious texts contain “prophecy,” but unique to the Bible are very specific prophecies that can be demonstrably proven to have been written before the events occurred. Isaiah 53 is an important example. Written some 700 years before Jesus Christ was born, it correctly prophesied that He would come from humble origins, die as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, be buried in a rich man’s tomb, rise to life again, and be glorified. There are hundreds of other such prophecies.

Through simple deduction we have concluded that God must exist and that the God of the Bible is the true God because His revealed Word is uniquely and demonstrably true. But who is He and what has He revealed about Himself?

We know that He is self-existent (Ex. 3:14; Is. 43:10), eternal (Ps. 90:2; Is. 40:28), omnipotent (Lk. 1:37; Mt. 19:26), omniscient (Ps. 147:4–5; Heb. 4:13), omnipresent (Ps. 139:7–10; Eph. 4:10), and unchanging (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8; Jas. 1:17). We also know that He is good (Ps. 34:8; 145:9), His Word is infallible (Mt. 5:18; 2 Tim. 3:16), and His nature is love (1 Jn. 4:8). Most importantly, we know that He is One (Deut. 6:4). These characteristics and attributes help us to understand the nature of God, but we need to know Him on a deeper level. In Scripture we learn that though God is one being, He exists as the mutual indwelling of three divine Persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mt. 28:19; Lk. 1:35; 3:21–22; Jn. 14:26; 2 Cor. 13:14). God is One and cannot be divided, thus these three Persons are neither parts nor modes. They are different and distinguishable in relationship and personality, but not in being or essence.

In the beginning, God revealed Himself as the Father and Creator of the universe. And then, in the fullness of time, God revealed Himself as the eternal *Logos*, Son of the Father, who came to demonstrate the depth of God’s love for fallen humanity by dying as a propitiation for our sins and rising again. Finally, when the Church was formed on Pentecost some 50 days later, God revealed Himself as the purifying and sanctifying Holy Spirit who has come to convict the world of sin and to seal all of those with faith in Jesus Christ. God has progressively revealed Himself to mankind through the dispensations of time and this God whom we believe in can be known personally and relationally. We declare of Him that there is no other and none else deserving of worship, glory, and praise. It is from Him that we have learned the way of salvation, which is found only in His Son, Jesus Christ.

# III. How Can I Be Saved?

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to the earth in the form of a sinless human being, died as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, was buried in a tomb, and rose again. When you believe this good news and place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved. For the Scriptures say:

“That if you may confess with your mouth that Jesus [is] LORD, and may believe in your heart that God raised Him out of the dead, you will be saved, for with the heart [one] believes to righteousness, and with the mouth is confession made to salvation; for the Writing says, ‘Everyone who is believing on Him will not be ashamed,’ for there is no difference between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord of all [is] rich to all those calling on Him, for ‘Everyone who, if he may have called on the Name of the LORD, will be saved.’”

- Romans 10:9–13 (LSV)

And:

“And having brought them forth, said, ‘Lords, what must I do that I may be saved?’ And they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved—you and your household.’”

- Acts 16:30–31 (LSV)

The universe, the earth, and everything in them were created by a good, loving, and perfect God. God created mankind in a sinless state, but our ancestors chose to disobey God's single commandment, which was not to eat the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Gen. 2:17). Because our ancestors sinned they became spiritually separated from God and their sinful nature was ultimately passed down to us (Rom. 5:12).

God is a holy and perfect God and because of your sinful state you cannot come near Him to have a relationship with Him and ultimately your sinful condition will result in physical and spiritual death since you have been cut off from God who is the source of all life. Yet because of God's great love for you (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8) He sent His Son Jesus into the world to live the holy and perfect life you should have lived and then He died in your place for your sins (2 Cor. 5:21). The Bible says that Jesus took your sins

upon Himself (Isa. 53; 1 Pet. 2:24) and through Him you can be healed and restored to God (1 Pet. 3:18).

Because He is perfect and all-powerful, three days after Jesus died He came back to life and now He reigns in Heaven forever. The Bible says that when you believe this good news God forgives your sins and reckons you righteous based on the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:22; 4:5). You are freely given eternal life and sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13). Only through Christ can you be reconciled to God (Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12).

The Bible is clear that we are saved by God's grace through our faith in Jesus Christ and not by our works or efforts to earn salvation (Eph. 2:8–9). However, the Bible also says that you can tell who has true faith based on what they do (Jas. 2:14) even though what they do cannot save them. Works are evidence that someone has true faith and is saved just like healthy fruit on a fruit tree is evidence that the tree itself and its roots are healthy. When someone truly believes the good news of Jesus and is spiritually born again they will now seek to follow Christ and obey His commands.

The first command is to be baptized as a public proclamation of faith. This shows the world that you have died to the old self and are a new creation in Christ. Romans 6:4 says it is also a powerful symbol of how Christ died and was buried (when you go under the water) and then rose again (when you come up from the water). The water is a reminder of Jesus' blood that was shed on the cross to wash away your sins (Acts 22:16).

After being baptized, believers begin to live a different life that is marked more and more by doing good and loving others. Believers develop friendships with other believers in order to pursue God together and encourage one another to keep their faith and grow in righteousness. Believers also devote themselves daily to reading God's Word (the Bible) and to prayer (Col. 4:2, 1 Tim. 4:13).

The Apostle Paul explicitly defines the *Gospel*, which simply means “good news,” as the propitiatory death of Christ for our sins, and His subsequent burial and resurrection. This he calls “of first importance” because it is this message that if believed reckons one righteous in the sight of God:

“And I make known to you, brothers, the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you also received, in which you also have stood, through which you are also being saved, if you hold fast [to] the word—what I proclaimed as good news to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as most important what I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Writings, and that He was buried, and that He has risen on the third day according to the Writings...”

- 1 Corinthians 15:1–4 (LSV)



## THE SPECIFICS OF FAITH



# IV. What Does the Bible Teach?

The Covenant Christian Coalition boldly proclaims the truths of the evangelical faith and the *Five Solae* of the Reformation: Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura, Solus Christus, Sola Gratia, and Soli Deo Gloria. The CCC also holds seven tenets, called *Convictions*, to be central to Christian belief and therefore non-negotiable:

1. There is One God who is eternal, self-existent, all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere-present, completely good, and never changing. God is perfect in moral character and His nature is love. God alone can declare whether conduct is right or wrong. *Scripture References:* Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 44:8; Psalm 90:2; Isaiah 40:28; Exodus 3:14; Revelation 19:6; Psalm 147:5; 1 John 3:20; Psalm 139:7–8; Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 119:68; James 1:17; Hebrews 13:8; 1 John 4:8; Judges 21:25; Isaiah 45:19

2. God subsists eternally in three persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are neither parts nor modes. *Scripture References:* Matthew 28:19; Luke 1:35; 3:21–22; John 1:1–2; 10:30; 14:16; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 Peter 1:2; see also Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7

3. The Bible is a compilation of God's words and in its original Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic form is inerrant and sufficient in itself for teaching Christian belief and practice. It should be interpreted literally, historically, and at face value unless the text itself allows for a different interpretation in a specific passage. *Scripture References:* Exodus 20:11; Matthew 5:18; 19:4–6; 24:37–39; John 10:35; Acts 1:16; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21; 3:15–16; 2 Thessalonians 2:14–15; Revelation 22:18–19; see also Genesis 41:25–27; Matthew 13:18–23; 13:36–43; Revelation 1:20

4. Mankind was given the free choice to obey God or rebel against Him in the Garden of Eden and freely chose to rebel by eating the forbidden fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This choice brought death, separation from God, and a sinful nature to the entire human race. *Scripture References:* Genesis 2:16–17; 3:6; 5; Isaiah 59:1–2; Romans 3:23; 5:12–18; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22

5. God planned in advance to send His Son into the world to die for the sins of mankind. This plan included the covenant of blessing with Abraham and the institution of the nation of Israel and was foreshadowed by the system of atoning sacrifices in the Levitical law. *Scripture References:* Genesis 22:17–18; Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 8:30–35; Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1–23; Revelation 13:8

6. God became man in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus lived a sinless and morally perfect life. He was crucified at the hands of the Romans and through death He atoned for the sins of mankind. He was buried and on the third day rose physically from the dead, conquering death and sin. Salvation is found in Christ alone by grace alone through faith alone and not by works. *Scripture References:* Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Matthew

1:22–23; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6–8; Colossians 1:15; 1 John 4:2; Isaiah 53:9; John 19:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:18–19; 2:22; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 3:5; Mark 15:43–47; Matthew 28:1–15; Romans 6:4; 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:1–32; 1 Peter 1:3; Ephesians 2:8–9

**7.** Jesus promised that in accordance with the Scriptures He would physically return to earth to rescue His Church, put an end to sin, and reign as King over Israel and the whole earth. By Him the living and the dead will be judged, some inheriting eternal life and others receiving eternal punishment. Christians must be watchful and ready for these events. *Scripture References:* Psalms 72:8–11; Daniel 2:44; 7:13–14; Ezekiel 33:1–6; Zechariah 14:1–9; Matthew 16:27; 24:37–44; 25:1–13; 25:46; Luke 12:37–40; 17:28–30; 18:8; 21:34–36; John 5:22; 14:3; Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 1:7; 11:15; 20:4–6

These seven points of doctrine are absolutely essential to complete and proper Christian teaching, but it is important to more fully understand the truth of Scripture:

### **A. On Biblical Interpretation**

We believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” by which we understand the whole Bible is inspired in the sense that holy men of God “were moved by the Holy Spirit” to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of the writings—historical, poetical, doctrinal, and prophetic—as appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the originals is therefore without error. We believe that all the Scriptures center around the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all the Scriptures were designed for our practical instruction, are infallible, inerrant, and should be interpreted for their plain meaning (Mk. 12:26, 36; 13:11; Lk. 24:27, 44; Jn. 5:39; Acts 1:16; 17:2–3; 18:28; 26:22–23; 28:23; Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 2:13; 10:11; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

### **B. On Creation**

The final guide to the interpretation of Scripture is Scripture itself and thus the account of origins presented in Genesis is a simple but factual presentation of actual events and therefore provides a reliable framework for scientific research into the question of the origin and history of life, mankind, the earth, and the universe.

The various original life forms (kinds), including mankind, were made by direct creative acts of God. The living descendants of any of the original kinds (apart from man) may represent more than one species today, reflecting the genetic potential within the original kind. Only limited biological changes (including mutational deterioration) have occurred naturally within each kind since creation.

The special creation of Adam (the first man) and Eve (the first woman), and their subsequent fall into sin, is the basis for the necessity of salvation for mankind. Death (both physical and spiritual) and bloodshed entered into this world subsequent to and as a direct consequence of man's sin.

For these reasons we believe, as the Scriptures attest, that the heavens and earth were created in six days (Ex. 20:11) and that mankind, created on the sixth day of creation, has existed since the beginning (Mk. 10:6; Mt. 19:4). We also necessarily believe that the great Flood of Genesis was an actual historic event, worldwide (global) in its extent and effect.

### **C. On the Canon of Scripture**

*As Article III Section 7 of the Constitution of the CCC proclaims:*

The Bible is the final authority for all matters of life, faith, and doctrine and in its original Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic form is completely infallible. The Bible says that the heart is deceitful above all else (Jer. 17:9) and the understanding of mankind corrupted (1 Cor. 1:20; 3:19), so God's Word must inform and ultimately decide all questions of truth and doctrine. The CCC rejects the deuterocanonical books, otherwise known as Apocrypha, because the ancient Jewish canons excluded them, Jesus excludes the time period in which they were written in Luke 11:50–51, no references can be found to them in the New Testament, and early Christians like Jerome fought against their inclusion. However, the Bible mentions and makes allusion to several books that are not in the current Protestant canon such as Jasher, Enoch, and the Wars of the Lord. The true canon begins with Genesis, ends with Revelation, excludes the Apocrypha, and likely includes several of these other referenced books, although it is not clear that the current translations of Jasher, Enoch, and others are accurate translations of the original writings and therefore their authority is in dispute. For this reason only the sixty-six books of the Protestant canon are considered authoritative and divinely inspired, although the study of Jasher, Enoch, and other books that are explicitly mentioned or referenced in Scripture is not precluded, so long as the studier recognizes their current unverifiable state.

### **D. On Salvation and Baptism**

We believe that man was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, and that he fell through sin, and, as a consequence of his sin, lost his spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and that he became subject to the power of the devil. We also believe that this spiritual death, or total depravity of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the Man Christ Jesus alone being excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad apart

from divine grace (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 6:5; Ps. 14:1–3; 51:5; Jer. 17:9; Jn. 3:6; 5:40; 6:35; Rom. 3:10–19; 8:6–7; Eph. 2:1–3; 1 Tim. 5:6; 1 Jn. 3:8).

We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again; and that no degree of reformation however great, no attainments in morality however high, no culture however attractive, no baptism or other ordinance however administered, can help the sinner to take even one step toward heaven; but a new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation, and only those thus saved are sons of God. We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our room and stead; and that no repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, nor all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles can add in the very least degree to the value of the blood, or to the merit of the finished work wrought for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity (Lev. 17:11; Isa. 64:6; Mt. 26:28; Jn. 3:7–18; Rom. 5:6–9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; 6:15; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:4–9; Tit. 3:5; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:18–19, 23).

We believe that the new birth of the believer comes only through faith in Christ and that repentance is a vital part of believing, and is in no way, in itself, a separate and independent condition of salvation; nor are any other acts, such as confession, baptism, prayer, or faithful service, to be added to believing as a condition of salvation (Jn. 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 6:29; Acts 13:39; 16:31; Rom. 1:16–17; 3:22, 26; 4:5; 10:4; Gal. 3:22).

We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises that faith in Christ which is illustrated and described as such in the New Testament, he passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according as Christ His Son is accepted, loved as Christ is loved, having his place and portion as linked to Him and one with Him forever. Though the saved one may have occasion to grow in the realization of his blessings and to know a fuller measure of divine power through the yielding of his life more fully to God, he is, as soon as he is saved, in possession of every spiritual blessing and absolutely complete in Christ, and is therefore in no way required by God to seek a so-called “second blessing,” or a “second work of grace” (Jn. 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 3:21–23; Eph. 1:3; Col. 2:10; 1 Jn. 4:17; 5:11–12).

We believe that sanctification, which is a setting-apart unto God, is threefold: It is already complete for every saved person because his position toward God is the same as Christ’s position. Since the believer is in Christ, he is set apart unto God in the measure in which Christ is set apart unto God. We believe, however, that he retains his sin nature, which cannot be eradicated in this life. Therefore, while the standing of the Christian in Christ is perfect, his present state is no more perfect than his experience in daily life. There is, therefore, a progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is to “grow in grace,” and to “be changed” by the unhindered power of the Spirit. We believe also that



the child of God will yet be fully sanctified in his state as he is now sanctified in his standing in Christ when he shall see his Lord and shall be “like Him” (Jn. 17:17; 2 Cor. 3:18; 7:1; Eph. 4:24; 5:25–27; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; 12:10).

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love, because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ, because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life, because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven, because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God, because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved, we and all true believers everywhere, once saved shall be kept saved forever. We believe, however, that God is a holy and righteous Father and that, since He cannot overlook the sin of His children, He will, when they persistently sin, chasten them and correct them in infinite love; but having undertaken to save them and keep them forever, apart from all human merit, He, who cannot fail, will in the end present every one of them faultless before the presence of His glory and conformed to the image of His Son (Jn. 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:16–17; 17:11; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 6:19; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1–2; 5:13; Jd. 24).

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience (Lk. 10:20; 22:32; 2 Cor. 5:1, 6–8; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 Jn. 5:13).

Finally, we believe that baptism is necessary for salvation—not a baptism in water—but the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism is received immediately upon belief in Christ for the forgiveness of sins and is an invisible action performed by God alone. However, water baptism is commanded, and all believers should immediately undertake it if they haven't yet. It demonstrates a saving faith because it is clearly taught in Scripture and when someone truly places their faith in Christ they will seek to obey His commands. We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only sacraments and ordinances of the church and that they are a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19–20; Acts 10:47–48; 16:32–33; 18:7–8; 1 Cor. 11:26).

## **E. On Eschatology**

*As Article III Section 6 of the Constitution of the CCC proclaims:*

The CCC organization itself affirms premillennialism, dispensationalism, and conditionalism as the proper understandings of the Parousia and the final fate of the unsaved based on a thorough historical-grammatical exegesis of the Bible and early church history. In contrast to essential Christian beliefs, no early Christian creeds specified how the early church understood these doctrines and for that reason the CCC

allows for different eschatological scriptural interpretations while encouraging all members and churches to apply a historical-grammatical hermeneutic when studying the Scriptures. In regards to the final fate of the unsaved, both conditionalism and eternal torment views of Scripture are acceptable, but universal reconciliation is rejected.

We further hold that, according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive to Himself into heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming, and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus, and that this event is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking (Jn. 14:1–3; 1 Cor. 15:51–52; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:13–18; Tit. 2:11–14).

We believe that the translation of the church will be followed by the fulfillment of Israel’s seventieth week (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 6:1–19:21) during which the church, the body of Christ, will be in heaven. The whole period of Israel’s seventieth week will be a time of judgment on the whole earth, at the end of which the times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close. The latter half of this period will be called the “Great Tribulation” (Mt. 24:15–21). We believe that universal righteousness will not be realized previous to the second coming of Christ, but that the world is day by day ripening for judgment and that the age will end with a fearful apostasy.

We believe that the period of great tribulation in the earth will be climaxed by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went, in person on the clouds of heaven, and with power and great glory to introduce the millennial age, to bind Satan and place him in the abyss, to lift the curse which now rests upon the whole creation, to fully restore Israel to her own land and to give her the realization of God’s covenant promises, and to bring the whole world to the knowledge of God (Deut. 30:1–10; Isa. 11:9; Ezek. 37:21–28; Mt. 24:15–25:46; Acts 15:16–17; Rom. 8:19–23; 11:25–27; 1 Tim. 4:1–3; 2 Tim. 3:1–5; Rev. 20:1–3).

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for His own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory; but the spirits and souls of the unbelieving remain after death conscious of condemnation and in misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, facing everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (Lk. 16:19–26; 23:42; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:7–9; Jd. 6–7; Rev. 20:11–15).

Finally, we believe that subsequent to the final judgment, God will create “a new heaven and a new earth” in which there will be no more sin or death. This perfect creation will persist for eternity. The capital of the new creation will be New Jerusalem, the heavenly Zion, in which will dwell the manifest presence of God. The saints and elect of God will dwell bodily therein in perfect bliss for endless ages.



# THE PRINCIPLES OF FAITH



## V. How Then Should I Live?

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. But the flesh with its fallen, Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, being with us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord (Rom. 6:11–13; 8:2, 4, 12–13; Gal. 5:16–23; Eph. 4:22–24; Col. 2:1–10; 1 Pet. 1:14–16; 1 Jn. 1:4–7; 3:5–9).

We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is a diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit, and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit may will. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted men—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints unto their work of the ministry. We believe also that today some men are especially called of God to be evangelists, pastors and teachers, and that it is to the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that these shall be sustained and encouraged in their service for God (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4–11; Eph. 4:11).

We believe that, wholly apart from salvation benefits which are bestowed equally upon all who believe, rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for his Lord, and that these rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself (1 Cor. 3:9–15; 9:18–27; 2 Cor. 5:10).

We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they are sent forth by Him into the world even as He was sent forth of His Father into the world. We believe that, after they are saved, they are divinely reckoned to be related to this world as strangers and pilgrims, ambassadors and witnesses, and that their primary purpose in life should be to make Christ known to the whole world (Mt. 28:18–19; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18–20; 1 Pet. 1:17; 2:11).

## VI. What Should I Stand For?

All believers and associated denominations are strongly exhorted to hold fast to these positions regardless of familial, cultural, or political pressure, recognizing that believing in and practicing biblical morality is strong evidence of one's saving faith.

*Abortion* is without question the murder of a child made in God's image. It should not be permitted even in the case of rape or incest as the child is innocent of any perpetrator's crime. The commission of the terrible evil of rape or incest can never justify the terrible evil of murder. In exceptional cases a mother's life may be jeopardized by pregnancy and only in this exceptional case does the CCC not take an absolute position. However, the mark of a Christian is love and sacrifice and the exemplary mother will put her child's life before her own, trusting that God will be faithful in the midst of tragic circumstances.

*Adultery* is intrinsically evil and never permissible under any circumstances, not only the physical act of adultery (Ex. 20:14), but also adulterous thoughts (Mt. 5:27–28).

*Alcohol consumption* is permissible and is in fact encouraged in some Scriptures (1 Tim. 5:23; Eccl. 9:7), but moderation is necessary. Intoxication and drunkenness are not permissible (Eph. 5:18; 1 Cor. 6:10). The Christian should never drink so much that he or she loses cognitive control and the ability to maintain a Christlike demeanor (Prov. 20:1; 23:29–35).

*Anti-Semitism*, a form of racism, should never be found in the thoughts, words, writings, or actions of a believer. Gentile believers have not replaced Jewish believers and in fact salvation has come from the Jews. The Apostle Paul likens the entirety of the people of God to an olive tree, which is Israel. Unbelieving Jews have been cut off from the tree and believing Gentiles have been grafted in (Rom. 11:17–24), but the roots of the tree remain Jewish through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the King of the Jews—Jesus. In fact, the Bible promises that one day the Jews will return to God and all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11:25–28; Isa. 45:17; Jer. 31:1). God gave to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob a specific area of land that they still have yet to take full possession of according to the promise. Since God is the ultimate sovereign of the Earth and His Word is true and the land deed still stands, Christians cannot support efforts such as the two-state solution. The Bible proclaims that judgment will befall those who divide God's covenant land (Jl. 3:1–2).

*Contraception* is not mentioned in Scripture except in the case of Onan who sinned by preventing his wife from becoming pregnant in order to withhold from her dead husband an heir (Gen. 38:8–10). For this reason only contraception that may result in the death of an embryo or done against the will of one's spouse is forbidden. Christians should be wise about this and research diligently before engaging in intercourse with one's spouse. Drugs such as Plan B are never permissible, but even typical hormonal contraception

drugs may result in abortion and their use is thus discouraged. Natural family planning is encouraged and in all cases the husband and wife should be one in heart and mind.

*Divorce* is inherently evil (Mk. 10:11–12), except in the case of marital unfaithfulness (Mt. 5:32). However, even in the case of adultery it is exemplary and most commendable to extend grace and forgiveness and ultimately reconcile with one's spouse recognizing that Christ died for us while we were yet sinners (Rom. 5:8) and God has reconciled us by the death of His Son (Rom. 5:10).

*Embryonic stem cell research* is never permissible because the embryos are in fact children in their earliest stage of development and therefore those who destroy embryos are murdering children made in the image of God. The Bible is clear that human life begins in the womb (Job 31:15; Ps. 22:10; 139:13; Jer. 1:5; Ex. 21:22–23) and science is clear that an organism's life begins at conception.

*Eugenics* in most forms should be understood as evil—especially historic eugenics programs that aimed at eradicating minority populations, killing the mentally handicapped, and murdering the terminally ill. Eugenics continues today in many forms including sex-selective abortions, minority-focused placement of abortion facilities, abortion of babies with trisomy disorders, and many instances of euthanasia. These are all intrinsically evil and Christians should themselves avoid these things while preaching forcefully against them.

*Euthanasia*, which is the intentional killing of a man or woman by both the perpetrator and the one being killed, is unquestionably murder and must not be committed or advocated by any believer.

*Fornication*, which is sexual activity outside of marriage, is always sinful (Mt. 15:19; 1 Cor. 6:9). God created sex to be enjoyed within the boundaries of marriage and within those boundaries there is great freedom for husband and wife. God created sex for building unity between husband and wife (Gen. 2:24, Mk. 10:8), for pleasure (1 Cor. 7:3–9; Prov. 5:18–19; Song 4:1–16), and for producing offspring (Gen. 1:28; 9:7; Mal. 2:15) and it is only in the context of marriage that these three purposes find their ultimate fulfillment. Men and women in a romantic relationship should not cohabit before marriage, so that they avoid fornication and the appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22).

*Gender roles* are biblical and must be upheld in the Christian community. Men and women are equal before God in regard to intrinsic value and salvation (Gen. 1:27; Gal. 3:28), but nevertheless have been given by God specific callings. The man is the head of his family—not as a coercive force, but as a servant leader (1 Cor. 11:3). The man is called by God to protect and manage his family well (1 Tim. 3:4), love his wife, and even lay his life down for her (Eph. 5:25). In regard to church leadership, men are called to exercise authority over the congregation, both in teaching to the collective assembly (1 Cor. 14:34–35) and in shepherding (1 Tim. 2:8–3:13). Women are called to respect their husbands out of willful humility (1 Pet. 3:1) and to help and encourage them (Gen. 2:18). In the Christian community women are uniquely called to teach and disciple other women (Tit. 2:3–5).

*Genetic manipulation* of plants and animals without combining genes from different species is permissible although the Bible does not appear to speak to this issue. Wisdom should be exercised in regard to this issue. However, the creation of hybrid species is unadvisable since God created plants and animals after their own kind (Gen. 1:11, Gen. 1:24). The creation of human/animal hybrids, three-parent babies, or babies resulting from the genetic material of two men or two women are intrinsically evil acts and Christian geneticists should seriously and prayerfully consider the spiritual implications of these creations.

*Homosexuality* is repeatedly condemned in the Bible as a sin and an abomination (1 Tim. 1:9–10; 1 Cor. 6:9–10; Lev. 18:22; 20:13), as well as unnatural (Rom. 1:26–28). God created sexuality for the purpose of intimacy and pleasure between a husband and wife and ultimately for bringing children into the world. Christians who struggle with homosexuality should flee temptation by any means necessary and should not define themselves by their struggle (1 Cor. 6:11).

*Homosexual marriage* is intrinsically evil for two reasons: first, because homosexual acts are sinful and unnatural, and second, because it is diametrically opposed to God's design for marriage, which is repeatedly defined in the Bible as the union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:5; Mk. 10:7; Eph. 5:31).

*In Vitro Fertilization* is not permissible for the same reason embryonic stem cell research is not permissible: embryos are necessarily destroyed thus the act of murder is committed.

*Marrying unbelievers* is not permissible for the committed Christian (2 Cor. 6:14), though having already been married before coming to faith is a common occurrence. In such a case the believer must remain committed to their unbelieving spouse and through love and faithfulness attempt to win them over with the Gospel (1 Cor. 7:12–16; 1 Pet. 3:1).

*Media* must be monitored and controlled in the Christian life. There is no justification, artistic or otherwise, for Christians to watch or listen to sinful things for the purpose of entertainment. There is much media a believer can enjoy, but that which is full of cursing, wonton violence, or sexuality is never permissible. The martyr Telemachus stands as an eternal symbol of this truth.

*Narcotic use* for the express purpose of treating an injury or disease is permissible, but narcotic use for the purpose of intoxication is a great and destructive evil to oneself, to one's family, and to one's society. There is evidence that drug intoxication is partly what was intended when the Bible speaks of the sin of sorcery.

*Pornography* is never permissible in any form as it is a form of adultery, or in the case of the unmarried, fornication. Pornography also promotes the objectification and abuse of women and children, is by some measures more addictive than heroine, causes permanent emotional and physical desensitization, and even induces early puberty in children exposed from a young age.

*Racism* is not in accord with the character of Christ who has made all believers one (Gal. 3:28; Rom. 3:29) for God does not show partiality (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11). Believers must not favor the rich over the poor (Jas. 2:1–9), but must show equal favor to all in regard to wealth, station, fame, or race. However, culture has greatly twisted and abused the word “racism” by extending it to include areas where believers in fact should lovingly discriminate between right and wrong: regarding religion, culture, and sinful behaviors.

*Slavery*, including and especially sexual slavery and trafficking, is never tolerable. Modern slavery differs greatly from biblical indentured servitude, which in certain times and cultures was lawful, in that modern slavery is illegal, always abusive, and routinely violent and coercive. With more people enslaved today than at any time in history, Christians should advocate zealously for their freedom and protection.

*Speech* should be Christlike in every way and “seasoned with salt” (Col. 4:6). Lies, curses, crude joking, and malicious gossip should never proceed from the mouth of a believer (Mt. 12:36; Prov. 19:5; Tit. 3:2; Eph. 5:4; 1 Tim. 5:13).

*Theft* is an obvious and unquestionable sin and is not dependent on circumstance (Ex. 20:15). The poor may not steal from the rich even though the rich have more and the poor have less. Instead, the believer struggling with poverty should work diligently (2 Thess. 3:10), trusting in God to provide (Mt. 6:25–34), and making his or her needs known openly to the Christian community (Acts 2:44–45). Believers should not take anything unlawfully, including intellectual property, music, or media. Believers selling products or services that they know are scams or falsely advertised are committing theft as well as lying and should cease immediately (Prov. 11:1; 20:23), returning the money that was stolen.

*Transgenderism* is both sinful and a great deceit. Sinful in that it defies God's created order of male and female and deceitful in that it convinces a person that they can be something that they are not nor could ever be. Christians must refer to a man in masculine terms and a female in feminine terms regardless of how that person may define himself—even if this results in physical, emotional, or legal consequences for the believer. Men should strive for masculinity and women for femininity (1 Cor. 6:9; 16:13), fully embracing God's design.



## VII. What Should I Confess?

All believers can confess the scriptural truths contained in the *Covenant* of the CCC, which is a modern *Statement of Faith* or *creed* and is composed of twelve “We believe” statements that articulate the biblical doctrines of the self-existence and perfection of God, the Trinity, the historical reliability of the Bible, the Gospel, salvation through faith apart from works, membership in the true Church established by Christ, and the imminent return of Christ for His Church.

WE BELIEVE in One God, revealed to the world as YHWH of Israel,  
Uncreated, self-existent, eternal, all-powerful, and unchanging.  
He knows all things and there is nowhere where He is not.  
He is good, His word is inerrant, and His nature is love.

WE BELIEVE God subsists as the mutual indwelling of three persons:  
The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in eternal communion.  
God the Son and God the Holy Spirit come from God the Father,  
And throughout eternity they have always existed with the Father.

WE BELIEVE God created time, space, matter, and all things,  
Accomplishing His initial act of creation in only six days.  
On the sixth day God created Man in His own image out of dust,  
Adam the first male and Eve the first female.

WE BELIEVE God said the man should be joined to his wife,  
And in so doing the two would become one flesh in marriage.  
In diversity He created the marital union sacred, monogamous,  
And dissoluble only by death or unfaithfulness.

WE BELIEVE God gave Man the choice of obedience or rebellion,  
And Adam and Eve willfully rebelled by eating the forbidden fruit,  
Which came from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.  
They suffered spiritual death and passed their sin nature on to us.

WE BELIEVE that God justly judged the world with a flood,  
Sparing Noah and his family through whom came the nations.  
And from Noah's son Shem came Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,  
And from Jacob the twelve tribes of Israel and the prophets.

WE BELIEVE that in the fullness of time God gave us His Son,  
Born under the law to redeem those condemned by the law.  
He was born in the town of Bethlehem to a virgin named Mary,  
And in accordance with God's command was named Jesus.

WE BELIEVE Jesus was chosen before the creation of the world,  
To live a sinless human life in perfect obedience to the Father,  
That He might die a substitutionary death in place of sinners,  
Giving forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all who trust in Him.

WE BELIEVE Jesus freely gave His life in obedience to the Father,  
And at the order of Pontius Pilate was flogged and crucified.  
At the ninth hour He declared His purpose in death was finished,  
And He died and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.

WE BELIEVE that death had no power over God's perfect Son,  
And on the third day He conquered death by rising to life again.  
This was literal, physical, and attested to by over 500 witnesses,  
And is the event that gives power and validation to our faith.

WE BELIEVE men are only reconciled to God through Jesus Christ,  
And receive salvation by grace through faith apart from works.  
By the Spirit all believers are baptized into one body, the Church.  
Christians baptize, share communion, and love one another.

WE BELIEVE the Church is a universal priesthood of believers.  
Membership is not obtained by belonging to a denomination,  
But is received by trusting in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.  
The Church awaits Jesus' soon return when He will call us home.



The Covenant Christian Coalition is an international, evangelical, post-denominational coalition of churches still faithful to Christ and the Gospel.

You can learn more at [www.ccc.one](http://www.ccc.one).

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